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ABSTRACT

In this address, the speaker examines several different types of organization (charismatic, traditional, bureaucratic, and task-oriented) and the role of the leader in each. In the modern, task-oriented system, his role can hardly be generalized as decision-making, direction and control, problem-solving, inspiration, communication, or any other simple function. It consists rather of realistically assessing environmental forces or constraints, articulating the organization's mission, vying for and securing resources for the functions of the organization, providing internal coordination, communication, and conflict resolution, and representing the organization to its constituency (taxpayers or shareholders). His leadership style is characterized as neither authoritarian nor democratic, but as flexible and adaptive. He must correctly assess the forces in himself, in the organization, and in the larger environment; he must then respond appropriately to these factors in each situation. He is neither a strong nor a weak administrator, but an integral part of a complex social system, in which his primary mission is to integrate productively both human and non-human resources into an organization working toward a common goal. Charts show the evolution of organization theories and their characteristic faults and strengths. (HH)

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ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP: SOME CONCEPTUAL MODELS*

Wilmar F. Bernthal

In a discussion of leadership, people in leadership positions and roles intuitively think in terms of leadership personality and styles--the appropriate leadership posture for an executive to assert. Because executives need to initiate action and to maintain control, they often think of themselves as the primary, if not only, source of influence, and of their followers as subjects, if not objects, to be directed and controlled.

Reliance on a leadership strategy centered in the personality of the leader dates back to antiquity. Most great leaders in history have been immortalized by legend of the power of their personality or their personal superiority. And still, today, such myths have great ego-building value, supporting every man's Walter Mitty type alter-ego need to see himself as a hero. These needs often are particularly strong and reinforced among people in executive positions.

Organizations built around a strong person are as strong and stable as that person, and subject to the same risks that he suffers, including his mortality. In such a context, organizational success depends on the continued proven competence of the "great man." As his charisma erodes, a struggle for survival and about successorship develops. Organizational innovation is limited to the leader, and organizational change comes only by a challenge to the leader--often by revolution. (See Exhibit I).

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Because of the instability of organizations built around one man, and of the pain involved in replacing leaders as their vitality wanes, traditional organizations led by "great men" typically institutionalize successorship by designating a crown prince or heir-apparent to whom the leadership mantle will fall automatically. This is the successorship method in monarchies and oligarchies, and in many family-owned and operated business firms. Although here the successorship problem is solved, a new problem is created. That is, there is no assurance of the competence, the proven superiority, of the leader. In fact, because he is dominated by a strong predecessor (father), he often is not prepared to assume a similar leadership role. Thus the institution may have peaceful succession, but, in the process, may lose its vitality and become prey to more aggressive organizations.

It is because of the fact that both charismatic organizations and traditional organizations are vulnerable to the eventual frailties of their "great men" that the bureaucratic organization was developed by Max Weber, who became its folk hero.

The Bureaucratic Ideal: Uses and Limitations

The "ideal" bureaucratic organization is completely rational and impersonal. In fact, its purpose is to free the organization from the instability and uncertainty caused by human mortality, and to substitute a set of rules and regulations that will permit the organization to function effectively and outlive any of its members. Thus, the basic characteristic of bureaucracy is its presumed immortality, its independence of specific persons.

The principles of bureaucratic organization provide for rational division of labor, a hierarchic separation between super-and subordinate offices, and a system of policies and rules according to which problems can be resolved by

rational application of appropriate rules. Job classificiations are ranked in the hierarchy, and reward is in money, graded according to wage classifications reflecting increasing job responsibility as one moves up the hierarchy.

Presumably, the problems of succession and of competence are solved by a rule concerning selection and promotion. Selection is according to merit, as shown by rational tests and examinations. Promotion through the hierarchy is by demonstrated competence, as judged by a "highly rational and competent superior" through systems of performance review. And reward is in money, according to the wage classification of the job. Incentive is to "climb the hierarchy" in order to qualify for higher monetary reward, and in order to gain higher control over subordinates.

Through systems of authority, direction, and control, backed up by systems of reward and punishment ("the carrot and stick"), bureaucratic leaders presumably will provide the ultimate in rationality and efficiency, with superior judgment residing at the top of the hierarchy, and methods for implementation of superior decisions through direction and control, reward and punishment, assuring efficient accomplishment of the organization's task.

The bureaucratic organization thus provides carefully structured job descriptions and organization charts, carefully planned reward systems, participation of subordinates controlled and limited to a specified function, strongly legalistic but fair and impersonal rules and discipline, and a system of selection and promotion designed to assure loyalty and conformity to the system and institution. (See Exhibit II).

It is this model of organization thatthe general public has in mind when it demands of the executives of private or public organizations that they keep things "under control." And, of course, in bureaucracies the executive will readily define his role largely in terms of his "superiority," and will try to

exercise influence on behavior and performance of members of the organization by exercising the prerogatives of his office. These consist of giving directions, and keeping control through eliciting reports and taking corrective action as he sees the need.

Such an uncritical view of the nature of executive leadership and responsibility in modern organizations--a view undoubtedly shared widely by the "taxpaying public" or by stockholders in private organizations--ignores the context Max Weber had in mind when he considered the bureaucratic system as the "ideal." The essence of bureaucracy is routinization, reducing decision on recurring phenomena to simple rules and procedures. Matters not covered by rules are handled by the "exception principle," which provides that exceptions (that is, events not yet provided for by existing rules) be bucked upward to a point where a "superior" will be able to make a decision, and hopefully to provide a new policy or rule by which subordinates may handle the problem should it recur in the future. Thus, the bureaucratic organization is designed to deal very well with problems requiring routine work, and to perpetuate itself in an environment in which change comes slowly, if at all. It tries to minimize the possibility of innovation, and provides that whatever innovation is needed is handled as high in the hierarchy as possible, and ultimately by the top man.

In terms of gaining discipline, obedience , and compliance by members of the organization, the bureaucratic model also assumes that the incentive of wages for a given job, and of higher wages for a higher rated job, as well as the punishment for disobedience, will be sufficient to assure compliance with impersonal rules and authoritarian edict.

To the extent, however, that an organization is confronted with a multiplicity of problems, many of them complex, and to the extent that organizational members are not entirely dependent upon the economic reward system

of the organization, the "ideal" bureaucratic construction may not serve the organization's purpose, and adaptations of it become necessary. The history of management thought has provided us with a number of such adaptations, each of which addressed itself to a particular problem and created, as a side-effect, some new problems for the executive. (See Exhibit I, Column 4).

Adaptations of the Bureaucratic Organization

Line and staff. As the work of organizations became more complex and varied, and executives in the hierarchy lacked the energy or competence to cope with increasing complexity, it became apparent that full-time knowledgeable persons in different specialties were needed within the management hierarchy. Yet to divide the labor of managers among a number of personal specialists would violate a sacred control principle in bureaucracies--that of "unity of command," or "one boss." It is through unity of command that clearcut job responsibilities are established, and systems of direction, accountability, and blamability, the essence of "control," are to be implemented.

The dilemma between division of labor among managers and unity of command was resolved by a classical organizational invention called "line and staff." Its rules were rational, simple, and clearcut: the line "commands" and the staff provides services or advice. Thus, at any level in an organization, a line superior would have access to facilitating services and to expert advice without having to share the decision-authority prerogatives of his position.

Although the "line-staff" solution has served organizations well for the last 60 years, two particular limitations of the concept become apparent as organizations and their tasks become increasingly complex. Since the "line" is concerned with implementation, it typically maintains the anti-innovation posture of traditional bureaucracy, leaving innovation to staff. Thus the

organization has "pockets of innovation," but also has resistance to change and an anti-innovation ideology in its major components. The more an organization is confronted with the need for frequent change and for complex problem solving in order to survive, the less it can limit its innovation to staff departments.

A second complication in "line and staff" organization concerns the nature of influence in organizations. The rationale for keeping staff advisory was to preserve unitary control within the chain of command. This rationale neglects the sociological fact that power does not reside merely in positional authority, but also in knowledge and in essentiality of function. The more an organization depends on the inputs from personal specialists in staff departments, the more its line managers are dependent upon their "advisors" for decision. Thus there is a power diffusion, shifting from positional line authority which relies upon threat of punishment for compliance, to knowledge and essentiality of function which relies upon the expertise of personal specialists, even if they possess no formal positional authority. The line and staff rationale, therefore, erodes as organizations shift from simple to complex tasks.

Charismatic leaders. Not only do line managers have their influence threatened by knowledgeable staff specialists, but subordinate members of organizations also develop subtle means for frustrating attempts by managers to keep them dependent and controllable. With increasing affluency, knowledge, mobility, and the right to organize and bargain collectively, management prerogatives often are threatened by countermeasures from below. A characteristic response of organizations to such resistance has been to try to identify leadership traits which presumably make the manager more influential, and to employ and promote people with appropriate strong leadership

characteristics into managerial positions. Although the list of leadership traits reads like the Boy Scout manual, and has not been validated, the attempts persist to solve through Dale Carnegie type courses ("How to Win Friends and Influence People") what may more basically be an organizational rather than a personality problem. Minimal personality characteristics may be a necessary, but not a sufficient, condition for organizational effectiveness.

Human relations training for first-line supervisors. Another response to the erosion of formal authority as a sufficient means to control behavior of rank and file employees has been to train first line supervisors in "human relations." Typically, the attempt has been to convert supervisors from use of harsh authority to use of benevolent authority, with the ultimate purpose being to maintain control over subordinate behavior. Although on occasion a genuine participative climate was established between supervisor and worker, the more common consequence was to place the supervisor in the middle between two opposing forces, with expectations of freedom from below, and pressures for enforcement and control from above. The dilemma results from managers trying to inject a fragment or dose of apparent freedom within a general climate of organizational control. Consequently, many "human relations" programs were perceived as attempts to gain compliance by making subordinates feel "as if" they were participating, and "as if" they were important--an ultimate hypocrisy. Legitimate human relations training has much promise, but only within a context in which the entire organization, and particularly middle and upper management, demonstrate in practice the stated beliefs and practices of the program.

Management by objectives. A continuing popular approach to making organizations effective is to depersonalize authority through programs of "management by objectives." These programs, in their many forms, are attempts to communicate to subordinates throughout organizations the purpose or intent of directives,

as they stem from the ultimate objectives of the organization itself. Thus, these programs encourage a dialogue between superior and subordinate about matters essential to organizational performance, and provide opportunities to explore mutually the alternatives through which performance may be achieved.

"Management by objectives" programs vary widely, however, in the degree to which objectives are imposed and communicated downward by essentially authoritarian supervisors, as compared to programs in which objectives are jointly and mutually developed and differences negotiated between superior and subordinate. One reason for the continuing popularity of "management by objectives" programs among many managers is that they permit the manager to use them as a tactic without necessarily requiring him to change his management philosophy or strategy. As a minimum, however, they make it possible to gain mutual understanding on goals,and may, in the appropriate organizational climate, also contribute to mutual commitment to effective implementation.

Decentralization. Decentralization is a deliberate attempt to push decisions as far down in the hierarchy of an organization as the available competence and information permits. As a philosophy, it is decidedly anti-bureaucratic in that decisions are deliberately "pushed down" in organizations in which ordinarily they would naturally gravitate toward the top.

The purposes of decentralization are to develop competence in decision making at lower levels in an organization, to take advantage of the practical wisdom available at lower echelons and often not available at the top, and to improve organizational morale and commitment by more meaningfully involving members not close to top management in organizational policy and decision making.

The costs of decentralization are considerable. Decentralization requires constant investment in developing competence in subordinates, and considerable attention to internal communication, placing information where it is needed and responding to requests for information. In fact, there is a danger of communication overload in which members of organizations spend an inordinate amount

of energy trying to ferret out useful information.

The risks to higher level managers also are real. Limits of freedom in decision need to be established and communicated. This is usually done through statements of "centralized policy," implying that decentralization applies only to the carrying out of policy; that is, to its administration. But development of subordinates and providing them full information also erodes the very basis of managerial control in traditional organizations--control by keeping subordinates dependent through rationing information and limiting their competence to a subspecialty. Thus, decentralization promotes interdependence, rather than dependence. As such, it is in conflict with bureaucratic control norms. Organizations using decentralization thus are shifting away from managerial control of subordinates to systems of subordinate development and, hopefully, self-motivation and self-control.

Job enrichment. Narrowly specialized tasks at lower levels in bureaucracies often are justified on grounds of "efficiency," particularly when the work involves mass production technology, such as assembly lines or mass production of paper work in offices. The motivational assumption is that the worker is to exchange his labor, as specified, for extrinsic reward such as wages and fringe benefits. It is becoming increasingly apparent, however, that an effective organization must provide jobs which, in themselves, provide some intrinsic satisfaction, beyond the extrinsic reward.

Job enrichment has both a horizontal and a vertical dimension. Horizontally, it means making jobs more meaningful, challenging, and rewarding. Vertically, it means making hierarchical relations with superiors more authentic, consultive, and supportive, rather than demanding and defensive.

As is the case with decentralization, job enrichment is an antibureaucratic move, attempting to make organizations healthier by creating motivational conditions under which the need for hierarchical control is reduced and

self-motivation and self-control enhanced. To achieve these conditions, managers steeped in the bureaucratic tradition may find it necessary to reconsider their assumptions about efficiency in relation to technology and work design, organizational structure, and managerial role.

Management development. Max Weber's ideal bureaucracy had built-in mechanisms for assuring selection and promotion of the most highly qualified members into management positions. The only problem for the manager was to enforce the system and thus make people work. As the conditions of subordinate dependency erode, and as knowledgeable people are necessarily integrated into modern organizations, it is becoming increasingly apparent that, rather than the manager "adjusting" his subordinates, his role may change to providing the resources, information, and managerial climate in which "subordinates" can work naturally and effectively; that is, to providing the climate for natural motivation and intrinsic reward.

Thus, an important task for modern organizations is to select and develop managers who are sensitive, analytical,articulate, adaptive, and creative. This is in contrast to the bureaucratic impersonal "leader" or the charismatic, inspirational leader . In modern organizations, the role of the manager is less that of a director and controller of human behavior than that of a coordinator, communicator,negotiator, coach, and provider of resources.

Many managers reared in the tradition of authority and control find it difficult to accept a changing role either intellectually or emotionally. Nevertheless, situations of interdependency, with knowledgeable and highly mobile employees engaged in complex problem-solving tasks, require a style of flexible management not found in traditional bureaucracies.

If, indeed, flexibility and adaptability to changing situations is a mark of the successful manager of the future, then management development programs become an important investment in organizational health. These programs need to provide not only the intellectual development of managers, consisting of concepts, analytical and communication skills, but also the emotional development which makes it possible to be influential without inordinate use of threat or fear. The former is available through many executive development programs. The latter may require sensitivity training of the type provided by the Institute for Applied Behavioral Science (formerly called the National Training Laboratories).

Organizations of the future: The Knowledge-Oriented Organization

The models of charismatic, traditional, and bureaucratic organization were built on the assumption that work is routine, simple, and often repetitive, and that, at the lower levels of organizations, only part of the man, usually his hand, is to be employed. The rest of the man is to be either neutralized by threat of punishment or pacified by benevolence.

Modern organizations find it increasingly difficult to immobilize that part of the person not needed for a narrowly specified job, since role expectancies among all members of organizations have changed from being passively acted upon to being actively involved in matters effecting them. But more significantly, modern organizations are rapidly substituting machines for hand power in simple tasks, and thus are employing not a hand but a brain. That is, rather than merely having pockets of innovation in staff departments, modern organizations need creative contributions to problem solving and task accomplishment throughout. This is particularly true in organizations where technology is changing rapidly, and where the environment confronts the organization with a continuing stream of new and different problems.

In knowledge-oriented organizations, the manager is confronted squarely with the dilemma that, in order to tap the knowledge, experience, and creative genius of organizational members, he needs to give the necessary freedom from fear and provide the supportive climate in which innovation and risk-taking can flourish. This may be at the expense of having tight control and certainty of outcome. The result should be a climate of personal security and support, but considerable idea-insecurity, with much challenge, inquiry, and conflict of ideas.

Working within the organization: employee relations. Whereas in the traditional bureaucracy a manager may define his role as primarily to direct and control, in a knowledge-oriented organization it shifts to providing an appropriate setting in which creative expression of this knowledge can take place. (See Exhibit III.) Thus, in addition to articulating goals and objectives and providing general policy-level guidelines for performance, a manager assumes the role of responding to the expressed needs, ideas, and interests of subordinates (a listening role), and representing these views upward in the hierarchy, and often to the outside public, such as taxpayers or stockholders. The more employees are professionally qualified and committed to the organization's goals, the more the manager's role shifts to communicating, coordinating, mutual problem solving, and providing the necessary resources for effective work. Rather than an emphasis on the vertical dimension of the organization, the hierarchy, the emphasis shifts to the horizontal dimension of organization, a colleague-type relationship. The manager's reward, also, shifts from finding primary satisfaction in maintaining control (having his own way), to satisfaction from facilitating mutual task accomplishment, much of which is achieved through task forces and project teams of an interdisciplinary character.

Representing the organization to the larger environment: public relations. The traditional bureaucracy is designed to implement the wishes of its constituency, the larger public, through a chain of command in which all ideas originate at the source of legitimacy, the top of the organization. In such organizations, the public typically holds the top manager responsible for all actions within the organization, and expects him to keep things under control. In general, the public does not perceive the difference between such organizations and knowledge-oriented organizations, such as schools, colleges, research organizations, or other organizations employing professionals in their primary activities. Thus, the public may expect the chief executive to be totally responsible for what happens within these organizations, and totally responsive to the public's wishes, when, in fact, an executive in such organizations has only limited control over the behavior of organization members, and necessarily must take calculated risks in order to permit creative work to take place.

Thus, the top executive in knowledge-oriented organizations has a particularly sensitive responsibility to communicate the nature and purpose of the organization to the larger public, to represent the goals and methods of organizational members to this outside public. In addition, he needs constantly to communicate to members within the organization the expections of the larger constituency, and the constraints on freedom they demand as a condition under which they will continue to provide the organization its needed financial and moral support. Representing the organization to the larger environment is largely a political role. Representing the values of the general constituency to independent-minded professionals within the organization is a difficult communication role.

In Summary

The executive's leadership role can hardly be generalized as one of decision-making, of direction and control, of solving and removing problems, of inspiration, of communication, or any other over-simplification. Rather, it consists of realistically assessing the forces or constraints within the environment, of articulating the mission of the organization, of vying for and providing resources for the organization to function, of providing for internal coordination, communication, and conflict resolution, and of representing the organization to the larger environment. His leadership style can be characterized neither as authoritarian nor democratic, but as flexible and adaptable. Thus he needs to correctly assess the forces in himself, in his organization, and in the larger environment, and then be able to respond appropriately to these factors in each situation. He is neither a strong nor a weak executive, but an integral part of a complex social system, in which his primary mission is to integrate both human and non-human resources productively into an organization working toward a common goal.

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EXHIBIT I

Evolution of Organization Theories--the Search for a Healthy Organization

	Charismatic Leadership →	Traditional Organization →	Bureaucratic Organization →	Adaptations of Bureaucracy →	Modern Differential Organization
Leadership succession	Unstable	Fairly Stable	Very stable (rational)	1. Line and staff 2. Charismatic leaders 3. Human relations training for supervisors 4. Management by objectives 5. Decentralization 6. Job enrichment 7. Management development for knowledge and sensitivity	Fairly stable (rational)
Leadership competence	Proven	Uncertain	Adequate for routine work in stable environment		High
Organizational certainties	Low	Low	High		Low
Organizational innovation	Limited to leader	Limited to leader, and uncertain	Limited to top of hierarchy		High, and distributed throughout the organization
Organizational success depends upon:	One person, the leader	A succession of persons from the institution	The system, independent of specific persons		The health of the human organization as a natural collective

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EXHIBIT II

EMERGING LEADERSHIP AND ADMINISTRATIVE PATTERNS IN BUSINESS ENTERPRISES*

Stage 1 Charismatic Domination (Leadership)	Stage 2 Bureaucratic Organization (Professional Leadership)	Stage 3 Task-Oriented Information Systems and Fluid Organizations
Strong top leader	Organizationally-created leader	Group leadership and decision
Strong owner influence	Indirect owner influence	Indirect owner influence
Non-rational	Highly rational	Highly rational
Hierarchy with informality of roles, positions	Formal roles, offices, and positions; strong hierarchy	Fluid structures: deemphasizes hierarchy
Arbitrary succession in hierarchy	Planned succession; assured careers and merit appointments	Weak hierarchy and more informal offices, positions
Loose functional units	Tight functional units	Task forces, teams, projects, and interfunction activity
Situation oriented	Institutionally oriented	Systems and Computer oriented
Emotional interpersonal relationships	Impersonal relationships	Colleagueship and personal relationships
Unstable; dependent on great leader	Stable and predictable	Stable, but less predictable
Resists specialization and routinization of decisions	Promotes specialization and routinization of decisions	Deemphasizes specialization and routinization of decisions
No organization charts	Strong dependence on charts	Deemphasizes charts
Handles emergencies and new situations well	Less flexible in emergencies and new situations	Slower and more uncertain in emergencies and new situations
Arbitrary reward systems	Planned reward systems	Rewards based on results
No participation in planning or decisions	Controlled participation	Meaningful participation in decisions and planning invited

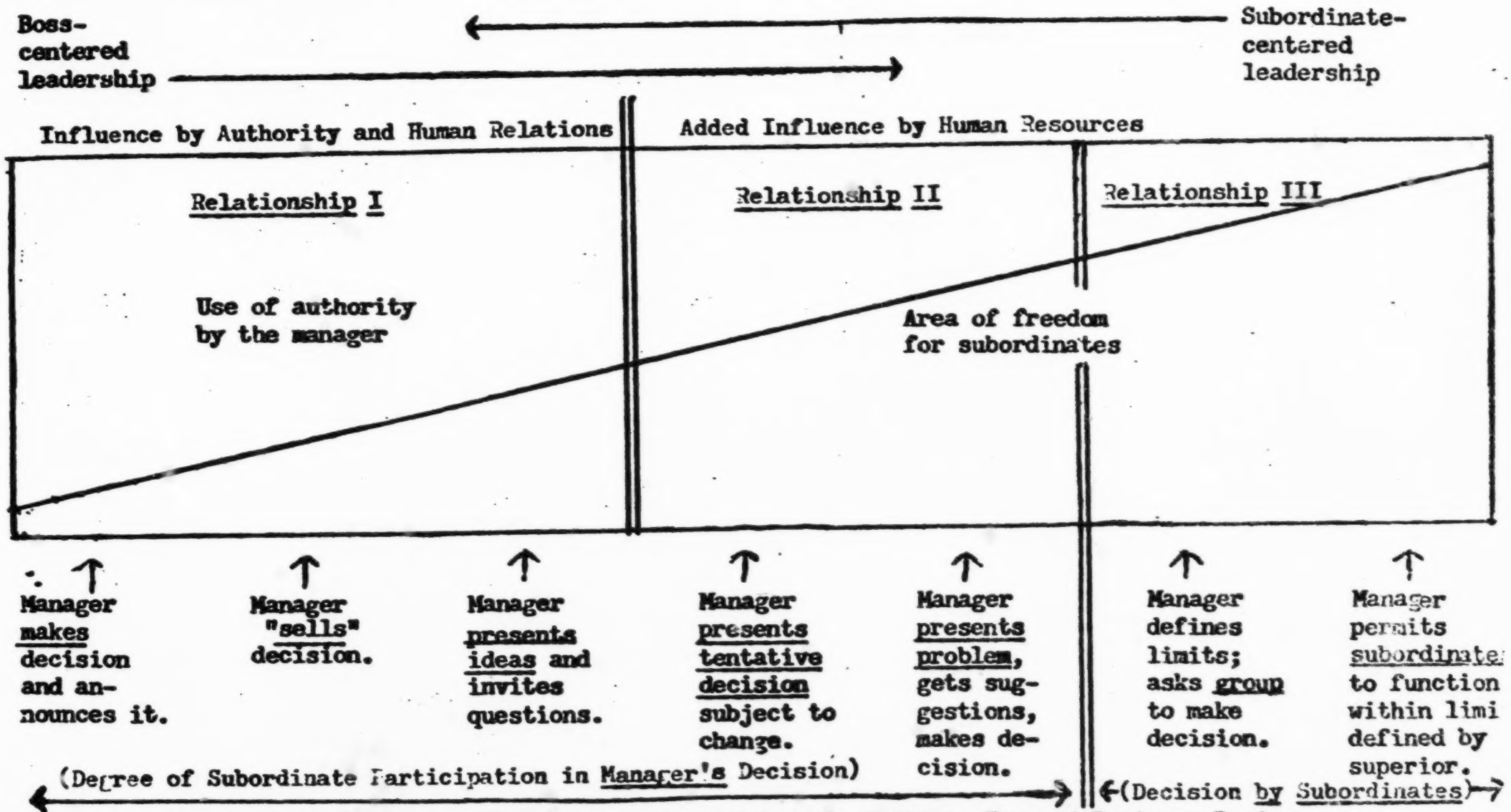
EXHIBIT II (continued)

Strong discipline with arbitrary rules	Strong discipline with fair rules	Deemphasis on rules and discipline
Moderately legalistic	Strongly legalistic	Permissive
Loyalty and conformity to leader	Loyalty and conformity to system and institution	Loyalty and conformity to profession and peer groups

* From Dalton E. McFarland, "Organizational Health and Company Efficiency," Business Topics, Summer 1965, pp. 45-57.

EXHIBIT III

CONTINUUM OF LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOR


Boss-centered leadership
Subordinate-centered leadership
Influence by Authority and Human Relations
Added Influence by Human Resources
Relationship I
Relationship II
Relationship III
Use of authority by the manager
Area of freedom for subordinates
Manager makes decision and announces it.
Manager "sells" decision.
Manager presents ideas and invites questions.
Manager presents tentative decision subject to change.
Manager presents problem, gets suggestions, makes decision.
Manager defines limits; asks group to make decision.
Manager permits subordinates to function within limits defined by superior.
(Degree of Subordinate Participation in Manager's Decision)
(Decision by Subordinates)

Source: Tannenbaum and Schmidt, "How to Choose a Leadership Pattern, Harvard Business Review, March - April, 1958. (Adaptations by Wilmar F. Bernthal, University of Colorado.)